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SOURCE Monitored Broadcasts

CPW Report No. 14 -- COMMUNIST CHINA

(Mar. 17-23, 1952)

SUMMARY

In spite of indications for several weeks that the antiwaste, anticorruption, anti-bureaucracy drive had reached its final stages and soon would be brought to an end, some stations during the week ending Mar. 23 continued to broadcast confession and accusation rallies and material aimed at promoting the drive. Reports that cadres and private businessmen had been pardoned following full confession, and that others were arrested for refusing to confess still were frequent.

There seemed to be considerable confusion or disagreement concerning the status of the drive. Some stations urged shop clerks, women, and other groups to continue their exposure of corrupt elements "until a complete victory is achieved"; asked that the masses "earnestly promote the drive"; and complained that many cases of corruption "have not yet been exposed." Some stations even spoke of bringing to an end the "first stage of the tiger hunt" and entering the second stage. Other stations, and perhaps a greater number, gave clear indications that the drive must be brought to a conclusion. The Central Government directive that remaining cases of corruption be disposed of soon was mentioned often, and reports of wholesale adjudication of cases were frequent. Hangechow announced that the local Austerity Committee had "completed its adjudication" of corruption cases; Wuhan said that the South China Bureau of the Communist Party had ordered the drive ended; and Peking spoke of occurrences in Tientsin factories, "where the drive has ended."

Charges of capitalist infiltration into State enterprises and Government offices for illicit gain dropped off sharply, which might be a significant indication that the campaign against the "capitalist class" had resulted in losses for the Chinese economy, and would have to be tempered considerably. Mukden declared in a broadcast that private industry had been told that "as long as it remains law abiding,

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it will receive equal treatment with State enterprises." This sounds quite different from the intemperate charges against "capitalists" and the "capitalist class" that have been heard since the anticorruption drive started, and which still are being heard occasionally over some of the regional stations. Other obstructionist tactics against the anticorruption drive were reported, but with less frequency than in earlier weeks. Here, too, it might be significant that approximately half of the monitored cases of obstruction placed the blame on cadres and Government officials rather than upon businessmen. Kaifeng even reported that the chairman and deputy chairman of the Austerity Committee in one Honan city were found to be among the chief obstructionists. A more negative resistance to the drive among cadres and senior clerks still was reported from time to time, but the attention given even to their shortcomings seemed to be on the decline.

On the other hand, actual cases of corruption, with arrests and punishment, were reported in greater numbers. Numerous big tigers were caught, about half of them private businessmen and half Government officials. Considerable attention was given to smuggling activities, with indications that smuggling through Canton and Hong Kong has been rather prevalent. Handling of opium and drugs by the smugglers was mentioned often, and "imperialist American and the Chiang Kai-shek bandits" were accused of trying to "drug the People's China." Considerable stress also was laid on corruption by pharmacists and handlers of drugs. A Shanghai broadcast declared that "the market is flooded with fake Western drugs," and that the price of foreign drugs has increased 60-70 times. Here, too, imperialist America is the chief criminal because of the "American attack upon the China mainland in 1950," but many Chinese dealers have been guilty of fraud. A shortage of penicillin was admitted, and charges made that "false penicillin" had been distributed in China.

New evidences of dislocations in the Chinese economy resulting from the anticorruption drive were unmistakable. Broadcasting stations stepped up noticeably their reports of increased production in individual shops and factories, with the regular explanation that the increased production efforts were made "to promote the drive." However, many other broadcasts explained more fully how various enterprises were attempting to keep up their production and at the same time continue the anticorruption drive. One store had created "two managements," one to take care of production and one to conduct the drive. One State grain company had kept operations at normal by "placing orders with private merchants for processing grain." Still another State factory had placed two of each 10 employees at work on the anticorruption drive, and was depending on the remaining 8 to do the work normally done by 10.

In some cases, however, the broadcasting stations seemed to make no effort to keep up the pretension that everything was running smoothly, with production being held to normal. A Chinchow broadcast blamed the anticorruption drive for causing one factory to reach only 70 percent of its January and February quotas. Tsinan admitted that in one place the cadres "permitted trade operations to come to a halt." Hofei quoted from newspaper articles which spoke of the "setback to production in State industries" because of the drive, and even charged that people had gone hungry while food rotted "because the responsible personnel had been removed." One chief administrator was quoted in a Yangchow broadcast as admonishing his cadres to "use the energy they had been putting into" the drive to promote production. A Foochow broadcast declared that in one Fukien hsien the cadres had been so involved in the anticorruption drive that they "caused general confusion among the farmers," with the result that "farm work has been entirely neglected." Wuhan reported that some factories in that area had "resumed operations."

Radio broadcasts also indicated clearly that food shortages and famine are growing in some areas. Tsinan told of large allocations of relief food grain, while Hangchow, Kaifeng, and Wuhan spoke of famine conditions. A Hangchow broadcast urged that potatoes be planted "to alleviate spring famine conditions." More alarm was expressed over the increasing number of deaths among work oxen, and one Hangchow broadcast suggested that some farmers had allowed their oxen to die so they could collect the insurance.

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Meanwhile much was said about the "mass patriotic emulation campaign" to get spring farming started and increase food production in 1952. There was evidence that considerable effort was being exerted to get farmers supplied with seed, tools, and fertilizer, and to guard against floods and drought. Here, too, difficulties were suggested. Hangchow asserted that in one place the villagers were "demanding more leadership," giving added evidence that changes brought by the Communist regime have brought a deterioration in farm leadership. Yangchow reported that in one northern Kiangsu area the farmers were demanding not only more food and fertilizer, but also "kerosene, matches, tung oil and cloth."

More evidence was seen of the breakdown in the marketing system of the Shanghai area. Hangchow reported that in one Chekiang hsien the farmers had 8 billion yuan worth of native products, such as tea, tung oil, and bristles, which they could not sell--enough to buy 40 million catties of rice and other grain to feed the people for one month. Nanchang also reported a meeting of farmers in one Kiangsi hsien to "correct their misunderstanding" of the Government's "free lending and borrowing policy."

The accusations that Chinese merchants and contractors sabotaged operations in Korea by cheating on contracts to supply the Chinese Volunteers were still heard, but were growing weaker. Such contracts invariably are spoken of as "army" contracts or "Government" contracts, indicating that Chinese regional broadcasting stations pay little attention to the myth that the Chinese Volunteers are nonofficial and are not directly controlled by the Army and the Communist Government.

Charges that American planes were dropping disease-laden insects on North Korea and Northeast China still were broadcast regularly by Peking, but not by the regional stations. Most of the propaganda on bacteriological warfare also came from Peking, with the regional stations confining their efforts to reports of protest meetings and organization of combat groups. Mukden reported protests by Christian religious groups in Northeast China, and a new determination on the part of these groups to "eliminate American agents" in their midst. Only one radio, Nantung, was heard to broadcast Vyshinsky's attack in the United Nations on American use of bacteriological warfare.

In organization of units to fight bacteriological warfare, the regional stations showed a declining interest in Northeast China and a greater interest in Korea. A few home groups to fight epidemics were reported, but numerous broadcasts told of volunteer units for the Korean front from among health workers and medical students. Organization of such units was reported from as remote an area as Chungking, where more than 3,000 health workers were said to be ready to depart for Korea.

Accounts of resistance to land reform were reported from Kiangsi, Yunnan, Hupeh, Chekiang, Hunan, and Szechwan Provinces. More reports of resistance were noted among the farmers themselves, who seem to be taking the former attitude of the landlords now that they are landowners. Formerly practically all reports of resistance placed the blame on the landlords and the cadres.

A Shanghai newspaper severely criticized a Wuhsi newspaper for being 2 days late in reporting action against seven Party members by the East China Party Committee, and then failing to comment on the affair. The Wuhsi paper accepted the criticism and promised to do better in the future. The critical article described the purpose of a newspaper in a rather novel fashion.

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